

Washington, DC - Today, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20) issued the following statement on the agreement between the House Committee on the Judiciary and officials from the Bush Administration to facilitate testimony from Karl Rove and Harriet Miers.

“Our Constitution’s system of checks and balances is an integral part of our government,” said Congressman Gonzalez. “This agreement will allow the Legislative Branch to conduct proper oversight of the Executive Branch, oversight that had been stymied by the intransigence of Mr. Rove, Ms. Miers, and the Bush White House and their claims of immunity from Congressional inquiry. Working together, we can ensure that the rights of the American people are protected, and this agreement represents a compromise that protects the rights and prerogatives of the Executive and Legislative branches of government, as well as the rights of the American people to a transparent government that remains accountable to the citizens who elect us.”

Under the terms of the agreement, the Committee will review a number of key documents previously withheld by the White House. The Committee will then conduct transcribed interviews of both Rove and Miers, the transcripts of which interviews will be made public. If the Committee should decide to do so, those depositions may be followed by hearings by the full Committee at which both Rove and Miers have agreed not to refuse to answer questions about the firings on grounds of executive privilege or government attorney-client privilege.

The decision by Federal District Court Judge John D. Bates rejecting the Bush Administration claims of immunity stands. The depositions will cover the firing of the United States Attorneys, the charges of selective prosecution, including that of former Alabama Governor Don Siegelman, and the allegations that false testimony was given to Congress.

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